

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 11 was objected to for informalities. In Applicant's "Amendment 'B'" mailed November 17, 2003, the listing of claim 11 contained a typographical error, wherein a character was inadvertently omitted from the claim. Thus, claim 11 has been amended herein to correct this error and to obviate the objection. Applicant respectfully requests that this amendment be entered so that record will accurately reflect the claims as filed and subsequently amended.

Claims 8-11 and 14-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Takahashi 22152. For the following reasons, the rejection is rendered moot.

The earliest effective date of the Takahashi 22152 reference under 35 U.S.C. 102(e)(1) is the March 13, 2001 filing date. The foreign priority claims of present application predate the Takahashi 22152 reference. Multiple claims for foreign priority have been made in the present application, the latest of which has a filing date of July 4, 2000, which is prior to the March 13, 2001 filing date of Takahashi 22152. Certified copies of the priority documents have already been received and acknowledged by the examiner (See Paper No. 13). A verified translation of each of the priority documents is enclosed herewith for the purpose of perfecting Applicant's claim to priority and disqualifying Takahashi 22152 as prior art.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone

Appl. No. 09/822,492
Amdt. Dated April 15, 2004
Reply to Office action of January 15, 2004

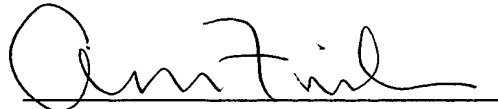
interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same
to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 33463.

Respectfully submitted,

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

By:


Aaron A. Fishman, Reg. No. 44682

1801 East 9th Street
Suite 1200
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3108
(216) 579-1700

Date: April 15, 2004